

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 were presented for examination in the present application and remain pending upon entry of the instant amendment. Claims 1, 10, 14, and 15 are independent.

Claims 14-16 remain allowed. Claims 8, 12, and 13 were indicated by the current Office Action as being allowable.

Independent claims 1 and 10, as well as dependent claims 2-7, 9, 11, and 17-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 over U.S. Patent No. 6,727,186 to Skotnicki et al. (Skotnicki).

Independent claim 1 requires, in part, the step of "forming a support structure attached to said fin portion and said semiconductor substrate (emphasis added)."

Applicants respectfully submit that layer 24 of Skotnicki is not attached to the silicon substrate 12.

Skotnicki discloses a silicon substrate 12 whose upper part is surrounded by a rectangular section cylindrical insulative box 13. On the upper surface of the silicon substrate 12, delimited by the insulative box 13, a first combination is formed consisting of a bottom layer 14 and a top layer 15. There is then formed on top of the first combination, a second combination made up of a bottom layer 16 and a top layer 17. The stack formed in this way covers all of the top surface of the silicon substrate 12. The upper part of the device is then covered with a layer 24 of a passivating material such as silicon dioxide.

Thus, Applicants submit that layer 24 of Skotnicki is not attached to the substrate as required by claim 1. Rather, Applicants submit that Skotnicki merely discloses that layer 24 covers the stack, where the stack covers all of the top surface of the silicon

substrate 12. It is respectfully submitted that the system of Skotnicki, which uses layer 24 to cover the stack, does not disclose or suggest the step of "forming a support structure attached to said fin portion and said semiconductor substrate" as recited by claim 1.

Furthermore, independent claim 1 requires, in part, the step of "removing at least a portion of said support structure after forming said first void (emphasis added)."

Applicants respectfully submit that hole 25 of Skotnicki is formed before tunnels 26, 27. Specifically, Skotnicki discloses that vertical hole 25 is formed through the silicon dioxide layer 24 by anisotropic plasma etching. Tunnels 26 and 27 are then selectively laterally etched via the hole 25. It is respectfully submitted that the system of Skotnicki, which removes layer 24 before forming tunnels 26, 27 does not disclose or suggest "removing at least a portion of said support structure after forming said first void" of claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Claims 2-9, 13, and 17-18 are also in condition for allowance for at least the reason that they depend from claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1-9, 13, and 17-18 are respectfully requested.

Independent claim 10, much like claim 1 discussed above, requires, in part, the step of "forming a support structure attached to said fin portion and said semiconductor substrate (emphasis added)".

Again, Applicants respectfully submit that layer 24 of Skotnicki is not attached to the silicon substrate 12. Rather, Applicants submit that Skotnicki merely discloses that layer 24 covers the stack, where the stack covers all of the top surface of the silicon substrate 12. It is respectfully submitted that the system of Skotnicki, which uses layer 24 to cover the stack, does not disclose or suggest claim 10.

In addition, independent claim 10 has been clarified to recite, in part, the step of "removing said second portion, but not said support structure, to form a first void between said fin portion and said semiconductor substrate (emphasis added)".

Applicants respectfully submit that Skotnicki does not disclose or suggestion forming tunnels 26, 27 without removing layer 24. Specifically, Skotnicki discloses that vertical hole 25 is formed through the silicon dioxide layer 24 by anisotropic plasma etching and then tunnels 26 and 27 are selectively laterally etched via the hole 25.

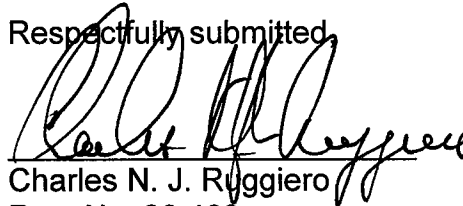
It is respectfully submitted that the system of Skotnicki, forms tunnels 26, 27 by removing layer 24 does not disclose or suggest "removing said second portion, but not said support structure, to form a first void" of claim 10.

Accordingly, claim 10 is in condition for allowance. Claims 11-12 are also in condition for allowance for at least the reason that they depend from claim 10. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 10-12 are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Such action is solicited. If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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